

Claims

1. A method for determining the refractive index
5 and/or compensation of the influence of refractive
index during interferometric length measurements with
the aid of an interferometer (13, 13') to which there
are applied at least two measuring beams (v_2 , v_3) having
at least defined frequencies approximately at a
10 harmonic ratio to one another, and at whose output
phases for the at least two measuring beams (v_2 , v_3) are
evaluated, the interferometric phases being multiplied
in an interferometrically fashion corresponding to the
harmonic ratio of the frequencies of the measuring
15 beams (v_2 , v_3) and at least one phase difference of the
phase values thus formed being examined, characterized
in that at least one of the measuring beams (v_3) is of
variable frequency, and in that from the phase
difference formed a control signal is formed in order
20 to vary the frequency of the variable frequency
measuring beam (v_3) and is used to control the
frequency such that the phase difference vanishes.
2. The method as claimed in claim 1, characterized in
25 that at least one reference beam (v_1) is generated at a
frequency that corresponds approximately to the
frequency of one of the measuring beams (v_3) and is
coupled to the frequency of another measuring beam
(v_2), and in that a frequency difference is measured
30 between the frequency of the reference beam (v_1) and
the frequency of the corresponding measuring beam (v_3).
3. The method as claimed in claim 2, characterized in
that one of the measuring beams (v_2) and the reference
35 beam (v_1) are generated by a coherent radiation source
(L1) with a frequency multiplier.

4. The method as claimed in one of claims 1 to 3, characterized in that the two measuring beams (v_2 , v_3) are derived from a beam of a coherent radiation source (L1) by means of a frequency splitter (36).

5

5. The method as claimed in one of claims 1 to 4, characterized in that high frequencies (Ω , 2Ω) that are at the same harmonic ratio to one another as the frequencies of one of the measuring beams (v_2) to the reference beam (v_1) are modulated onto the superimposed measuring beams (v_2 , v_3) in a reference branch of the interferometer (13').

6. An interferometer arrangement for carrying out the method as claimed in one of claims 1 to 5, having at least one coherent radiation source (L1, L2) for generating at least two measuring beams (v_2 , v_3) having defined frequencies approximately at a harmonic ratio to one another and having an interferometer (13, 13') whose output signals are passed to a beam splitter (DST 13, DST 22, DST 32) separating the measuring beams, the separated measuring beams being passed to optoelectronic transducers (PD12, PD13; PD22, PD23; PD32, PD33), and at least one of the output signals of the optoelectric transducers being fed to a multiplier (16, 22, 32) corresponding to the harmonic ratio of the frequencies of the measuring beams (v_2 , v_3), characterized in that the frequency of at least one of the measuring beams (v_3) can be varied by means of a frequency controller (18, 23, 35), and in that a phase comparator (17, DBM) for the phases of the output signals of the optoelectric transducers (PD12, PD13, PD22, PD23; PD32, PD33) is used to generate a control signal representing a phase difference, which control signal is fed to the frequency controller (18, 23, 35) to form a control loop for the interferometric phases (ϕ_2 , ϕ_3).

7. The interferometer arrangement as claimed in claim 6, characterized in that the coherent radiation source (L1, L2) is designed to generate at least one reference beam (v_1) whose frequency corresponds approximately to
5 the frequency of one of the measuring beams (v_3) and is harmonically coupled to the frequency of another measuring beam (v_2).

8. The interferometer arrangement as claimed in claim
10 6 or 7, characterized by a frequency multiplier assigned to a coherent radiation source (L1, L2).

9. The interferometer arrangement as claimed in one of claims 6 to 8, characterized in that use is made in
15 a reference branch of the interferometer (13, 13') of a frequency modulator (30) whose controller is connected to a high frequency generator for two high frequencies (Ω , 2Ω) whose frequency ratio to one another is that of the frequencies of the measuring beams (v_2 , v_3).